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ABSTRACT

One of five individualized courses included in a parent involvement curriculum, this course is designed to assist adults in developing the types of relationships which will positively affect children's development. The course is comprised of two units: (1) Self-Image and (2) Self-Control. Each unit begins with a Unit Learning Experience Guide that gives directions for unit completion. The remainder of each unit consists of Learning Activity Packages (LAP) that provide specific information for completion of a learning activity. Each LAP is comprised of the following parts: objective, evaluation procedure, resources, procedure, supplemental sheets, study guide, and a LAP test with answers. The course is preceded by a pretest which is designed to direct the student to units and performance activities. (LRA)

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MOUNTAIN PLAINS LEARNING EXPERIENCE GUIDE:

Parent Involvement.

Course: Interaction With Children

CE 027 809

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Mountain-Plains Education & Economic Development Program, Inc.
Glasgow AFB, Montana 59231

Learning Experience Guide

CURRICULUM AREA: PARENT INVOLVEMENT,
FAMILY CORE CURRICULUM

DESCRIPTION:

The Parent Involvement program is designed to assist adults acquire knowledges and understandings about developmental characteristics of children from birth through adolescence, and ways to positively affect a child's development.

Ways to develop adult-child relationships are provided to influence the development of a child's self-image. Study of discipline techniques useful in developing child self-control are included. Included also are techniques for good physical care of the baby and home teaching of the infant.

Techniques are studied that assist the adult with physical, mental and emotional support of the preschool child, middle age child, and adolescent. The program includes both individual and group learning activities.

RATIONALE:

Knowledge of developmental characteristics and changes in children assists in understanding what is realistic to expect from the child. It also helps one better understand what motivates a child's actions. Understanding child motivations enables an adult to be more effective in guiding and otherwise attempting to influence them.

PREREQUISITES:

None

OBJECTIVES:

Identify developmental characteristics of children from birth through adolescence and ways that the adult may identify, guide and assist in that development.

RESOURCES:

A resource list is attached. This list indicates the books, films, etc. believed necessary for completing this curriculum area program.

Principal Author(s): L. Leland

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

The Parent Involvement program is made up of curriculum components from five courses. Each course and unit of the curriculum has a Learning Experience Guide (LEG) that gives directions about completing that component.

It is recommended that the course "Interaction With Children" be taken first. Following that course, any or all of the remaining courses may be taken.

Before beginning any part of the program, a pretest is taken. This pretest covers concepts used in the complete program and is used to determine which skills and knowledges the student has at present and which need to be learned.

After the pretest is completed and scored, a plan may be made that identifies the parts of the program one needs to successfully achieve the goal for the Parent Involvement student. The plan may also give the order in which the program parts are to be completed.

This program plan basically involves identifying the successfully completed or prevalidated units on the Student Progress Record (SPR). The student then has a record that specifically states what is completed and what remains to be accomplished in the Parent Involvement program.

The general procedure for the Parent Involvement program is as follows:

1. Read the curriculum area LEG for this program.
2. Take the Parent Involvement program pretests.
3. Begin and complete the first assigned course. Each course LEG describes the procedure for accomplishing the course. The SPR indicates the units and Learning Activity Packages (LAPs) the student is to complete in the course.
4. Proceed to the next assigned course and complete it.
5. Continue the sequence of beginning and completing assigned courses until all courses in the Parent Involvement program are completed.
6. Take the Parent Involvement post test.

CURRICULUM COMPONENTS:

The curriculum components (courses, units and LAPs) for the Parent Involvement program are listed on the attached SPR.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

Evaluation is by pre and post testing using a multiple-choice type of test.

The test is used as a pretest to determine which units, if any, the student may be able to validate. The student is considered validated for a particular unit if 4 out of 5 items are correctly answered for each LAP part on the pretest.

The test will also be taken by the student as a post test to determine any changes resulting from taking all or part of the program.

FOLLOW-THROUGH:

After reading this guide, take the Parent Involvement pretests.

RESOURCE LIST BY COURSE FOR

CURRICULUM AREA 66: PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Interaction With Children 66.01

Printed Materials

1. Help Your Child to Like Himself. Hiam G. Ginott, This Week Magazine, February 23, 1969.

Audio/Visuals

35 mm Filmstrip/Cassettes:

1. Everyday Problems of Young Children (Series 1). Rose Mukinji, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1974.
2. How to Get Your Child to Listen to You and How to Listen to Your Child (Series 2). National Education Association, 1971.
3. The Child's Relationship With the Family (Series 3). Suzanne S. Freeman, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.
4. The Child's Point of View (Series 4). Dr. David Elkind, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.
5. Your Child and Discipline (Series 5). Rudolph Driekens, M.D. and Vicki Saltz, R.N., National Education Association.

16 mm Filmstrip:

6. Reward and Punishment. CMR Educational Film Library.

Equipment

1. 35 mm filmstrip/record projector.
2. 35 mm filmstrip/cassette projector.
3. 16 mm filmstrip projector.

Printed Materials

1. Your Child's Intellect. Bell, Olympus Publishing Company, 1973.

Audio/Visuals

35 mm Filmstrip/Cassettes:

1. Child Care and Development (Series 1). Elizabeth G. Mountain, McGraw-Hill Films.
2. How the Average Child Behaves: Ages 1-5 (Series 4). Maja Bernath, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1968.
3. Preparing the Child for Learning (Series 3). Dr. J. Ronald Lally, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.
4. The First Eighteen Months from Infant to Toddler (Series 2). Rita Kramer, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1974.

Equipment

1. 35 mm filmstrip/cassette projector.

Printed Materials

1. The Ways Children Learn. Murphy and Leeper, Department of Health, Education and Welfare Publication #(OCO)72-15, 1970.

Audio/Visuals

35 mm Filmstrip/Cassettes:

1. Child Care and Development (Series 1). Elizabeth G. Mountain, McGraw-Hill Films.
2. Everyday Problems of Young Children (Series 1). Rose Mukinji, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1974.
3. How the Average Child Behaves: Ages 1-5 (Series 4). Maja Bernath, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1968.
4. Preparing the Child for Learning (Series 3). Dr. J. Ronald Lally, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.
5. Your Child: From Home to School. National Association of Elementary School Principles, 1972.

Equipment

1. 35 mm filmstrip/cassette projector.

Middle-Age Child 66.04 - Adolescence 66.05

No outside resources. All printed materials are attached to the LAP.

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Glasgow AFB, Montana 59231

Learning Experience Guide

COURSE: INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN

DESCRIPTION:

Interaction with Children is designed to assist adults in developing the types of relationships which will positively affect children's development. The course consists of study of the development of self-image in children and the influences adults have in this development, the study of communication skills adults may use with children, and the study of discipline techniques useful in helping the child develop self-control. This course includes both individual and group learning activities.

RATIONALE:

Knowledge of the development of self-image and self-control in children and the influences adults have on this development enables adults to develop positive relationships with children.

OBJECTIVES:

Identify factors that influence the development of self-image and self-control and ways adults may guide this development.

PREREQUISITES: None

RESOURCES:

A resource list is attached.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete each unit required, according to the Student Progress Record.
Complete course post test.

UNIT TITLES:

.01 Self-Image
.02 Self-Control

FOLLOW-THROUGH:

Go to the first assigned unit.

Principal Author(s): B. Peterson - A. Webber

RESOURCE LIST

Printed Materials

1. Help Your Child to Like Himself. Hiam G. Ginott, This Week Magazine, February 23, 1969.

Audio/Visuals

35 mm Filmstrip/Cassettes:

1. Everyday Problems of Young Children (Series 1). Rose Mukinji, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1974.
2. How to Get Your Child to Listen to You and How to Listen to Your Child (Series 2). National Education Association, 1971.
3. The Child's Relationship With the Family (Series 3). Suzanne S. Freeman, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.
4. The Child's Point of View (Series 4). Dr. David Elkind, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.
5. Your Child and Discipline (Series 5). Rudolph Driekens, M.D. and Vicki Saltz, R.N., National Education Association.

16 mm Filmstrip:

6. Reward and Punishment. CMR Educational Film Library.

Equipment

1. 35 mm filmstrip/record projector.
2. 35 mm filmstrip/cassette projector.
3. 16 mm filmstrip projector.

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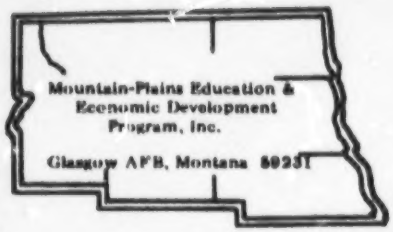

Learning Experience Guide

UNIT: SELF-IMAGE

RATIONALE:

Knowledge of the techniques for building a positive self-image will enable the adult to positively influence the use a child makes of his aptitude and abilities.

PREREQUISITES: None

OBJECTIVES:

Identify factors that influence the development of self-image and ways adults may guide this development.

RESOURCES:

Printed: Attached Information Sheets

Help Your Child to Like Himself, Hiam G. Ginott, This Week Magazine, February 23, 1969.

Audio Visuals:
Filmstrips: The Child's Relationships with the Family, Suzanne S. Freman, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.

The Child's Point of View, Dr. David Elkind, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1973.

How to Get Your Child to Listen to You and How to Listen to Your Child, National Education Association, 1971.

Equipment: 35 mm Filmstrip/Record Projector
35 mm Filmstrip/Cassette Projector

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete each LAP required, according to Student Work Plan. Participate in Group Activity Packages required. Complete Unit Post Test with 80% accuracy.

Principal Author(s): A. Webber

PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES:

.01 The Development of Self-Image
.02 How Adults Can Help
.03 Adult Expectations and Self-Image (GAP)
.04 Communication With Children (GAP)

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

80% correct responses on objective multiple-choice test.

FOLLOW-THROUGH:

Go to the first assigned Learning Activity Package.

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Mountain-Plains Education & Economic Development Program, Inc.
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Learning Activity Package

Participant: _____

Date: _____

PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY: The Development of Self-Image

OBJECTIVE:

Identify the factors that influence the development of self-image.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

80% accuracy on LAP test.

RESOURCES:

Attached Information Sheet: "The Development of Self-Image"
Filmstrip: "How the Child Sees Himself", Parents Magazine
Equipment: 35 mm Cassette/Filmstrip Projector

PROCEDURE:

1. View the filmstrip, "How a Child Sees Himself."
2. Read "The Development of Self-Image."
3. Complete LAP test according to information in resources.
4. Obtain answer key and correct test.
5. Study areas of LAP test you answered incorrectly.
6. If your score is less than 80%, retake the LAP test until you score at least 80%.

Principal Author(s): A. Webber

The Development Of Self-Image

Self-image is the way a person views himself. He may see himself as good or bad, handsome or ugly, smart or dumb or any range of things in between. Everyone has a self-image. Everyone believes himself to be OK in some areas and not OK in others. It is important that the self-image of a child be more OK than not OK. The development of self-image begins at birth and continues throughout one's life.

There are six general ideas dealing with the development of self-image in children. They are:

1. Self-image is not formed by a single event. The development of self-image is a gradual process. Forces affecting the development of self-image are physical, environmental and psychological.

2. The self-image very seldom stays the same. The child enlarges ideas about himself through all kinds of experiences. In these experiences, his relationships with others is most important. Whether or not the child is ready for new experiences depends upon the child's own interpretation of his past experiences. What his parents or friends think of what he has done isn't nearly as important as what the child himself thinks.

3. The early years provide the foundation of self-image. If a good self-image has developed during the early years, the child has a good foundation. He can weather the storms of later periods.

4. There is a clear agreement between a child's self-image and his behavior. The child who feels people like him will usually be very outgoing and friendly. The child who feels nobody likes him will be afraid to be friendly.

5. Feelings of adequacy or inadequacy are an important part of self-image. Each child needs to feel he is able to do things others think are important. Feelings of adequacy or inadequacy will greatly influence:

a. the child's approach to new experiences.
b. the child's relationships with family.
c. the child's relationships with peer group.

6. The child is the most important interpretor of his experiences. The interpretation has an important influence on further emotional development.

The following are important influences on the development of self-image:

1. Family
2. Bodily Forces
3. School
4. Peer Group

How these influences affect the individual child will depend upon the child's past experiences. Important, also, are the people he comes into contact with.

Family

The child's original images of himself are formed in the family. The infant sees himself from the way his needs are met. If he's loved and given good care, he feels he must be a pretty good person. Long before he can think, the infant is aware of feelings. Tone of voice or the way he is held tell him a lot. If the infant is happy, he feels good about himself and his family.

The family is equally as important during the pre-school years. The child naturally loves to explore his world. If he is constantly told "no", he will wonder what's wrong. Acceptance of the child during this time is still very important. The child is more independent and should be accepted as an individual. Acceptance does not mean lack of order or no limits. Limits, however, should be set according to the level of development of the child.

Self-discipline, taught in the family, is another influence on self-image. Learning self-discipline is a long and gradual process. Again, learning self-discipline should be geared to the child's level of development.

A sense of adequacy stems from success. There must be agreement between the standards of the home for the child's success and the child's ability. Each achievement brings a feeling of success. It doesn't matter how much a child achieves. The important point is how the adult receives the achievement. If he is praised, the child will feel adequate. If his achievements are viewed as unimportant, he will feel inadequate. If too much is expected of the child, he may never feel success.

Bodily Form

The rate of growth of the body has an important influence on self-image. Body size, strength, body build and energy are all important. For instance, the preadolescent who is small for his age will find it hard to compete with those larger. Body size will not only affect the child's self-image, but his feelings of adequacy and behavior toward others.

School

School brings a whole new set of experiences to the child's life. His abilities are judged by teachers and peer group. He must learn to cope with school by himself. This may be his first experience where his parents aren't on hand to help.

Peer Group

The peer group becomes very important during the preadolescent years. This importance continues through adolescence. The peer group feels adequacy is very important. Therefore, the child should be able to do what the other kids can do. For the child who doesn't meet adult standards, the peer group may be especially important. If he can meet peer group standards, he may develop feelings of adequacy.

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Learning Activity Package

Student: _____

Date: _____

PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY: How Adults Can Help

OBJECTIVES:

Identify the ways adults can determine a child's feelings about himself and help the child develop a positive self-image.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

80% accuracy on LAP test.

RESOURCES:

Attached information sheet "How Adults Can Help".

Handout: "Help Your Child To Like Himself" - Ginott.

Filmstrip: "Dependence vs Independence", Parents Magazine.

Equipment: 35 mm Cassette/Filmstrip Projector.

PROCEDURE:

Steps

1. View filmstrip "Dependence vs Independence".
2. Read "How Adults Can Help" and "Help Your Child To Like Himself".
3. Complete LAP test according to information in resources.
4. Obtain answer key and correct test.
5. Study areas of LAP test you answered incorrectly.
6. If your score is less than 80%, retake the LAP test until you score at least 80%.

Principal Author(s): A. Webber

How Adults Can Help

When adults want to know how a child feels about himself, they should observe the child's behavior. Behavior is the language of self-image. Adults need to discover why behavior takes place. Then it is up to the adult to provide an environment which leads to a good self-image in the child.

The adult should be observant of those behaviors that occur over and over. The behavior that is appropriate for the child's age that he shows no interest in should concern the adult. For instance, being a part of group activities is very important to the child approaching adolescence. If the child has no interest in group activities at this age, there may be a problem. This child may not feel people like being with him.

The child usually participates in situations that are important to him. Very seldom will a child participate in something that threatens him. The child usually has little to do with behaviors that cause him tension. This type of behavior is call avoidance. The three types of avoidance behavior are discussed below.

1. Denial of a situation may take the form of forgetting what happened. A present situation may also be ignored. A child who is confident socially will usually know all about the social activities coming up at school. A child who is shy may just ignore these events or forget they are happening.

2. Distortion of a situation is misinterpreting what happened. This may take the form of a "sour grapes" attitude. "It wasn't a big deal anyway. I don't care." Shifting the blame in a fight is another example of distortion. Still other children may put others down to improve their own self-image.

3. Aggression takes the form of a direct attack on another. This attack may be physical or verbal. It is very important here that the child is expressing his feelings. The important thing should be why the child is attacking another - not how.

When the adult is observing behavior to find out how the child feels about himself, he should

1. concentrate on behavior that happens over and over
2. concentrate on behavior wrong for the child's level of development
3. concentrate on avoidance behavior.

It is important to do a lot of observing. After the observation, the adult should try to guess what the behavior means to the child. Why is this behavior taking place? It is now time to observe more behavior and refine the first guesses. After the adult is sure why the behavior is happening, he can then begin working with the child. Helping the child develop a positive self-image requires knowledge of how the child feels about himself in the first place.

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Group Activity Package

Student: _____

Date: _____

TITLE: Adult Expectations and Self-Image

OBJECTIVE:

Discuss the ways adult expectations influence the self-images of children.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

Completion of Group Activity.

RESOURCES:

Filmstrips: "Forcing a Child to Fail", Parent's Magazine.
"Communication is an investment", "Parent's Magazine.
Equipment: 35 mm Cassette/Filmstrip Projector.

PROCEDURE:

Steps

1. View the filmstrip, "Forcing a Child to Fail."
2. View the filmstrip, "Communication is an investment."
3. Be prepared to participate in group discussion on the following questions:
   1. How do our own needs and expectations affect our children?
   2. How can adults communicate their standards and values to children and still help children gain self-acceptance?
   3. Why are Jean Pigget's findings about the rate of children's learning so useful to us in understanding early childhood behavior and self-image?

Principal Author(s): A. Webber

4. Why does pressure lead to frustration and resentment? How can this frustration and resentment discourage the formation of a good self-image?

5. Why is it important to accept a child's (and our own) human weaknesses and admit our mistakes?

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Group Activity Package

Student: _____

Date: _____

TITLE: Communications With Children

OBJECTIVE:

Identify various types of, and recognize the effects of communication skills that are helpful in communication with children.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

80% correct responses on GAP test.

RESOURCES:

Collection of role-playing situations. (cards)
Filmstrips: "How to Get Your Child to Listen to You", "How to Listen to Your Child", (National Education Association)
Equipment: 35 mm Record/Filmstrip Projector.

PROCEDURE:

Steps

1. View the filmstrips: "How to Get Your Child to Listen to You".
2. Choose a partner and play the role described on the role-playing card.
3. Present role-playing situation to the group.
4. Be prepared to discuss possible corrections of role-playing situations as they are presented to the group.
5. View filmstrip: "How to Listen to Your Child".
6. Complete GAP test.
7. Obtain answer key and correct test.

Principal Author(s):

A. Webber

8. Study areas of GAP test you answered incorrectly.

9. If you scored less than 80%, retake GAP test until you score at least 80%.

ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN LISTENING TO YOU

2. Play the part of a parent who uses bad timing when communicating with his/her child.

   You may create your own situation or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   EXAMPLE:

   Five-year-old Jimmy comes into the house after fighting with his friend - the zipper is torn loose from his new jacket.

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ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN LISTENING TO YOU

6. Play the part of a parent who does not allow a child to express his feelings when communicating with his/her child.

   You may create your own situation or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   EXAMPLE:

   Four-year-old Jane becomes more and more frustrated when she can't get the attention of her mother and father and your two guests after dinner. The four of you are talking internally, renewing your friendship after a long separation. Suddenly, you are shocked when your little girl loudly shouts:

   "You're all a bunch of dirty old smelly stinkbugs. I hate you."

ROLE-PLAYING ACTIVITIES

1. Play the part of a parent who fails to answer questions as quickly, candidly, and forthrightly as possible with his/her child.

   You may create your own situations or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   Example:

   Mother is busy preparing dinner. Six year-old Jimmy asks, "Why does the soap get littler in the water?"

ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN LISTENING TO YOU

5. Play the part of a parent who does use sarcasm or ridicule when communicating with his/her child.

   You may create your own situation or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   EXAMPLE:

   A little boy and his father were in an ice cream parlor. The boy said, "Dad, I want a double-decker ice cream cone." When the father replied, "I'll get it for you," the boy said, "No, I'll get it myself."

ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN LISTENING TO YOU

3. Play the part of a parent who knows or at least pretends to know all the answers when communicating with his/her child.

   You may create your own situation or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   EXAMPLE:

   Nine-year-old Debbie asks a group of questions regarding the effects pollution has had on wildlife.

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ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN LISTENING TO YOU

7. Play the part of a parent who does use labels when communicating with his/her child.

   You may create your own situation or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   EXAMPLE:

   Four-year-old Jerry spills his milk at the table.

ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN LISTENING TO YOU

4. Play the part of a parent who does not make allowance for disagreement when communicating with his/her child.

   You may create your own situation or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   EXAMPLE:

   How come I have to take care of the yard and take the garbage out? Johnny's mother doesn't make him do all that stuff! You're not fair! Kids shouldn't have to do that much work. Nobody is made to do as much as I have to do.

66.01.01.04.A2-4

ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN LISTENING TO YOU

8. Play the part of a parent who does not understand adolescence for what it is when communicating with his/her child.

   You may create your own situation or use the following example. Ask a class member to play the part of your child.

   EXAMPLE:

   An adolescent reacts to his parent's "hassling" him about his long hair:

   "I guess I might cut it if they didn't hassle me so much. But as long as they try to make me cut it, I'll be sure to keep it long."

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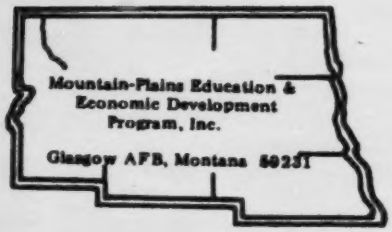

Learning Experience Guide

UNIT: SELF-CONTROL

RATIONALE:

Knowledge of training techniques and applications will enable the adult to effectively guide the child's development toward self-control.

PREREQUISITES:

Validation of Unit 66.01.01 (Interaction with Children).

OBJECTIVES:

Identify training techniques which lead to self-control of the child.

RESOURCES:

Printed - Attached Information Sheet .

Filmstrips - Everyday Problems of Young Children, Rose Mukenji, Parents' Magazine Films, Inc., 1974, 35 mm.

Your Child and Discipline, Rudolph Dreikens, M.D. and Vicki Saltz, R.N., National Education Association.

16 mm Movie - Reward and Punishment, CMR Educational Film Library.

Equipment - 16 mm Projector
35 mm Record/Filmstrip Projector.
35 mm Cassette/Tape Projector

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete LAP - 66.01.02.01 - Discipline = Self-Control. Participate in Group Activity Package - Self-Control Training Techniques. Complete Unit/LAP test with 80% accuracy.

Principal Author(s):
B. Peterson

PERFORMANCE ACTIVITES:

.01 Discipline = Self-Control
.02 Applying Self-Control Training Techniques (GAP)

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

80% correct responses on multiple-choice objective test.

FOLLOW-THROUGH:

Go to the first assigned Learning Activity Package.

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Learning Activity Package

Student: _____

Date: _____

PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY: Discipline = Self-Control

OBJECTIVE:

Identify training techniques which lead to self-control of the child.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

80% correct responses on UNIT/LAP test.

RESOURCES:

Filmstrip: "When Children Disobey", Parents Magazine Films, Inc.
Attached information sheet: "Discipline = Self-Control".
Equipment: 35 mm Cassette/Filmstrip Projector.

PROCEDURE:

STEPS

1. View filmstrip, "When Children Disobey"
2. Read "Discipline = Self-Control" paying particular attention to training methods for self-control.
3. Complete Unit/LAP test.
4. Instructor will correct the answer sheet.
5. Study areas of Unit/LAP test answered incorrectly.
6. If you scored less than 80%, retake the Unit/LAP test until you score at least 80%.

Principal Author(s):
B. Peterson

DISCIPLINE = SELF-CONTROL

Discipline is sometimes a frustrating subject today because so many parents are confused by conflicting opinions from all sides. One magazine article says one thing; another says the opposite. One book says to do this; another says not. A relative advises one course of action; a friend swears by the opposite. Parents are continually asking themselves: "Am I being too strict? Am I being too permissive? Was it wrong of me to spank Jimmy this morning? I certainly felt like it, but I'm not sure I did the right thing."

First of all, what exactly do we mean by the word discipline? Discipline is a word with many meanings. Webster's Dictionary defines it as: (1) "to instruct, educate or train," and (2) "to chastise, or punish." If you visit with a group of mothers at randon, chances are that many of them would tend to think of discipline as something you do to get a child to behave properly. In the minds of many people, discipline is usually a punishment, as a means of getting a child to behave.

We will be using a far brooder definition - "training." The word discipline is related to the word disciple. When you discipline your child, you are really training him to be a disciple of you, his teacher.

Parents need to ask themselves, "What is the goal they are working toward in the training of their children?" The answer may be to produce an adult who has learned self-control - who has learned to make his own choices and control his own behavior, who has learned to exercise his freedom in a responsible way.

What can parents do to help guide the child toward self-control and still continue to strengthen his self-image? The following training methods have been proved effective:

1. Use "environmental control".
   Suppose you visited a nursery school and found the room stripped down with no educational or play equipment whatsoever. No blocks, no trucks, cars, wagons, crayons, paint, paper, clay - nothing for the children to play with. If a teacher actually tried to teach children in such a barren and unstimulating environment, she would have her hands full of discipline problems. Look at your own house and backyard. Is it one which has little in the way of play equipment for a young child? Is it full of adult things which he must not touch? If so, you will probably have a number of needless discipline problems on your hands. But if you provide an interesting and stimulating environment in your home and back yard, you will be using environmental control to prevent discipline problems.

Think of long trips on a car with small children. To some parents such trips are nightmares, simply because they provide nothing for young children to do during such a long trip. They don't take along games or art materials or surprises to introduce when children become restless. They don't plan the trip so that they can stop once in awhile at a park or open space where the children can get out and run around for a bit. Then the parents wonder why their children are fighting, whining,

and making the trip miserable.

Environmental control is something parents need more of. The more we can arrange the environment of the child, the fewer discipline problems will arise.

The following is a list of suggestions for modifying the home environment to make it easier for a child to do things for himself, to manipulate objects safely and to avoid frustration that comes when he cannot control his own environment.

1. Get clothes that are easy for the child to put on by himself.
2. Build a stool or box the child can stand on to reach his clothes in the closet or lower the rod for hanging his clothes.
3. Use child size eating impliments.
4. Put closet hooks at a low level.
5. Use unbreakable cups and glasses.
6. Nail a door handle on screen doors low enough for the child to reach.
7. Turn pot handles to the back of the stove when cooking.
8. Put matches out of reach.
9. Keep the basement door locked.
10. Remove expensive breakable objects.
11. Lock up sharp tools.
12. Put a rubber mat in the bath tub.
13. Store slippery throw rugs.

Conflicts can be prevented by thoughtfully arranging the environment of teen-agers, too. They also need adequate space for their personal belongings, privacy and opportunity for independent activity. The following is a list of suggestions for environmental control for older children:

1. Provide the child with his own alarm clock.
2. Provide adequate closet space with numerous hooks.
3. Establish a message center in the home.
4. Go over instructions on new appliances together.
5. Discuss in advance such complicated legal matters as the curfew, auto liability insurance, responsibility in case of auto accidents, use of alcohol and drugs, and so on.
6. When a teen-ager is doing his own laundry, make the job easier by having all necessary equipment and supplies readily available.
7. Suggest that a child always carry a dime for an emergency telephone call.
8. Have a child write out a list of friends and their telephone numbers, in case the child has to be located unexpectedly.
9. Teach a child how to take phone messages.
10. Always knock before entering a child's room.
11. Include children in discussions involving family plans that will affect them.
12. Arrive at mutually accepted "house rules" for party guests prior to party.

2. Use an individualized approach.
Parents know their children are unigue. Yet in practice, parents often try to use the same discipline methods on all of their children, as if one were like the other. Obviously, our children are not the same. They start out with different combinations of genes. Biologically, one child is more highstrung, one is more easy-going.

The combination of genes plus family position (whether he is a first, second, third, etc., child) means that each child in your family will be different. Therefore, each child must be taught differently. You should handle a highstrung child differently from the way you handle an easy - going one. Unfortunately, most parents do not do this. They look for one method of discipline which will apply to all children. Yet, strangely enough the only universal methods which do apply to all children promote a poor self-image! But when we deal with the positive methods which promote good self-image, we need to treat each situation individually.

3. Give a child freedom to explore his environment.
When he first grabs a spoon and indicates to you that he wants to feed himself, give him the chance. What difference does it make how much of a mess he makes at this age? He is learning self-control. If you continue to feed him, you are going to slow down the development of his independence and self-control. As soon as he can dress himself, turn on his own bath water or brush his teeth, let him do these things by himself.

To allow a child to do these things calls for patience. We could certainly do these things much faster, but it is much more beneficial if he does them himself.

Children and adults view dressing quite differently. We think of a zipper as something to be closed when a child is getting in or out of a garment. A child views a zipper quite differently. To him it is a sort of toy.

A zipper to my Mommy
Is a thing that fastens clothes.
To me it's a tiny railroad track.
That goes and goes and goes.

We view a bath as something to get us clean. A child thinks of a bath as a delightful opportunity to play with water. So we need to exercise patience and give a child time to do things his own way.

4. Rely on unconscious imitation.

Children are terrific imitators. And because of this, we have a powerful teaching tool at our disposal: we can furnish living methods of positive personality traits and good habits. Children will learn from us by unconscious imitation.

Understanding this idea will save us needless battles with our children. If we show good table manners by our own examples, our children will imitate us when they grow old enough. Not at two or at four years, but later. If we are persistent in what we attempt and do not give up at the first signs of difficulty, our children will imitate our persistence. If we want our children to respect the rights and feelings of others, we must begin by respecting the rights and feelings of our children. When we nag a child to respect the feelings of others, we do not respect his feelings, thus our actions are teaching him far more powerfully than the words we speak.

Not only does the child unconsciously imitate the behavior of a parent, but he will absorb the general atmosphere of his home: friendly and cooperative, hostile and antagonistic, or concerned with social status. The atmosphere of the home is the stage setting for whatever else we try to teach by way of discipline. Every day we are teaching them through the silent language of our own behavior.

5. Use emotional support.
Children are small and helpless and feel inferior to their parents and other adults in strength and power to cope with the world about them. If you don't believe it, try this experiment. Walk around on your knees for a while. See how you feel looking up at those giants of the adult world. The feelings of helplessness you would have if you tried this little experiment is what all children experience. This is why all children need emotional support and encouragement from their parents, in order to cope with these feelings of inadequacy.

6. Let the child learn by natural consequences.
This is one of the most powerful tools parents have to enable children to learn things. Unfortunately, it is a tool few parents use. Let's see how natural consequences works.

A child doesn't eat the food on his plate at breakfast. He dawdles and fools around and does everything but eat. Mother does not get angry or threaten the child with punishment, instead, she merely removes the food from the table at the end of the meal and lets the natural consequences take over. Before too long the child will probably want a snack. Mother can then say, "I'm sorry you're hungry, we will have lunch at twelve o'clock. Its too bad you have to wait so long." The hunger the child experiences is a natural consequence of not eating his breakfast. It promotes a far faster change in his actions than any amount of scolding or punishment by his mother would do.

Of course, you need to use common sense in utilizing this concept of natural consequences. If you let a toddler experience the natural consequence of running out into a busy street, you might end up with a dead child. So you step in and prevent him from running into the street. When natural conse-

quencies of a child's actions might result in serious or fatal injury to the child, you need to prevent these natural consequences from taking place. But where natural consequencies will result merely in unpleasantness for the child, you step aside and let these natural consequencies take place.

It would be nice if we could rely entirely on the natural consequencies of inadequate behavior to discipline a child. Unfortionately, natural consequencies are not always sufficient. Sometimes we must find artificial consequences to apply to the behavior of a child.

These are three most commonly used methods:

1. Deprive the child of something important to him.

Suppose your five-year-old scribbles on your living room walls with crayons. Such behavior is "normal" for a two-year-old. But it is an act of hostility for a five-year-old. Unfortunately for your discipline, there are no unpleasant natural consequences for the child. You have to create some. Artifical concequences which will set firm limits to the child, and, in effect, say to him: "No more of this!"

If you feel suffeciently angered when you discover it, you may immediately spank him. This is one type of artificial but unpleasant consequence for him. Or you might deprive him of some privilege, perhaps saying "Danny, you're old enough to know not to draw on walls with crayons, so I guess you won't be allowed to use your crayons for three days. That will help to remind you that crayons are to be used on paper, not on walls."

2. Isolate the child by sending him out of his social group.

Suppose your four-year-old is disrupting the play of a group of children in your back yard. You might say to him, "Charlie, I see you are not able to play well with the other children right now. You keep hitting them and causing trouble. You'll have to go to your room and play by yourself until you tell me that you're able to control you actions."

When ever you use social isolation as a means of discipline, it is important you make it an open-ended affair. Don't just send the child to his room, as if he had to stay there forever. Always let him know that when his behavior is able to change and he is able to play reasonably with the other children, he can come back and play.

3. Spank the child.

Lets make it clear that there is a "right" kind of spanking and a "wrong" kind. The wrong kind is a mean, cruel and sadistic beating. This fills a child with hatred, and a deep desire for revenge. This is the kind that is administered with a strap or stick or some other kind of parental "weapon." Or it could be a mean humiliating slap in the face.

The right right of spanking is simply the hand of the parent administered a few times to the child's bottom. The right kind of spanking is a positive thing. It clears the air, and is preferred to moralistic and guilt-inducing parental lecturers.

Let's stop a moment and see where we are. We have discussed that the natural consequences of a child's misbehavior may have to be supplemented by artificial consequences. But even though these consequences of a child's misbehavior are artificial rather than natural, there are still some basic principles governing their use.

1. The artificial consequences should be reasonably consistent.

   The same consequence should follow the same behavior. If your child is deprived of his crayons one day for scribbling on the wall, but is laughed at the next day for doing exactly the same thing, it will be very difficult for him to learn to stop scribbling on walls.

2. The artificial consequences should be immediate.

   The more closely related in time a consequence is, the more it will help a child to learn new behavior. When the unpleasant results follow after a considerable delay in time, it is difficult for a child to see the connection. For instance, if your child has misbehaved in the middle of the morning, let the unpleasant consequence begin right then. Don't put off the punishment until Dad gets home that night. Say: "All right, Jimmy - I'm afraid you're not going to be allowed to watch TV the rest of the day, beginning right now."

3. When depriving a child of something important to him, the amount of time should be reasonable.

To deprive a five-year-old of watching TV for a month is unreasonable. The punishment then becomes meaningless to him. He has no incentive to improve his behavior so that he may be allowed to watch TV again. To deprive him of watching TV for a few days is a meaningful punishment, and does give him the insentive to improve his behavior.

4. Never deprive a child of something really crucial to him as a punishment.

Parents have been known to deprive a child of a birthday party as a punishment. Or of a special trip to an amusement park which he had been looking forward to for a long time. This accomplishes little in the way of true behavior change. The child reacts to them only with deep hostility and a desire for revenge. As a child sees it, to deprive him of something like a birthday party constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment." And he is right.

5. The artificial consequences should be as relevant as possible to the misbehavior.

If a child has scribbled on the wall with crayons, it is relevant for him to be deprived of the use of his crayons for several days. And he will recognize the relevance of such a punishment.

In summation, you want your child to become an adult who will be able to manage completely by himself, who will be in short a self-controlled person. But in the years from toddlerhood through adolescence, your child needs parental discipline in order to guide him in the direction of self-control.

Discipline has been defined as a teaching process on the part of the parent, and a learning process on the part of the child.

While we are discipling our children and guiding them toward our goal of self-control, let us not forget they are still children. A favorite cartoon shows a mother walking along the street, dragging a little child by the hand and saying to him, "Stop it, Jimmy - you're acting just like a child!" Yes, he is, and let's give him the right to act that way!

Mountain-Plains Education & Economic Development Program, Inc.

Glasgow A.F.B., Montana 59231

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Group Activity Package

Student: _____

Date: _____

TITLE: Applying Self-Control Training Techniques

OBJECTIVE:

Student will apply self-control training techniques to a given set of behavior problems.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

Completion of group activity.

RESOURCES:

Movie: Reward and Punishment, CRM Films, 16mm.
Filmstrip: "Your Child & Discipline", National Education Association.
Attached Behavior Problem Examples
Equipment: 16 mm Projector.
35 mm Filmstrip/Record Projector

PROCEDURE:

Steps

1. View movie, Reward and Punishment.
2. View filmstrip, "Your Child and Discipline".
3. Using the set of behavior problems, determine the self-control training technique which would be most appropriate in each situation. Use the following list of training techniques. Justify your answers in each case and be prepared to discuss with the group.

   a. environmental control
   b. individualized approach
   c. freedom to explore
   d. unconscious imitation
   e. emotional support
   f. natural consequences
   g. reward and punishment
   h. deprivation
   i. isolation
   j. spanking

Principal Author(s):

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1. Ten-year-old Ronnie comes home with a new transister radio which does not belong to him.

2. Two-year-old Jenny runs into the street in front of an oncoming car.

3. Four-year-old David is fighting with a group of six children in his back yard and throwing rocks at his friend's toy truck.

4. Twelve-year-old Jane is telling reputation damaging stories about a schoolmate.

5. Fourteen-year-old Sam is asked by his mother to mow the lawn, which he refuses to do.

6. Thirteen-year-old Jeff's room is a constant disaster area despite suggestions to clean it up.

7. Three-year-old Cathy dawdles at lunch each day. She is very much aware that a nap follows her lunch.

8. Two and half-year-old Betty sucks her thumb when she is tired, lying down for a nap and going to to bed at night.

9. Five-year-old Brian wets his bed at least four times a week at night.

10. Eighteen-month-old Tom just will not be toilet trained despite mother's putting him on the toilet every 30 minutes.

11. Three-year-old Mary makes a terrible mess at the table during every meal. Food is all over the floor, table, chair and herself.

12. Ten-year-old Joan does not want to move to her father's relocation sight because she must leave her friends. She has been crying and pouting for nearly a week.

13. Seventeen-year-old Paul takes the family car for a ride with some friends without asking permission.